

C. Hoyler.

Heimtal in the Making.
Reminiscences of the Beginnings of a
Moravian Congregation in Alberta, Canada.

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By Rev. P. R. Henkelman
Edmonton Moravian Church
Edmonton, Alberta.
Date Sept. 16, 1954

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REMINISCENCES

OF THE

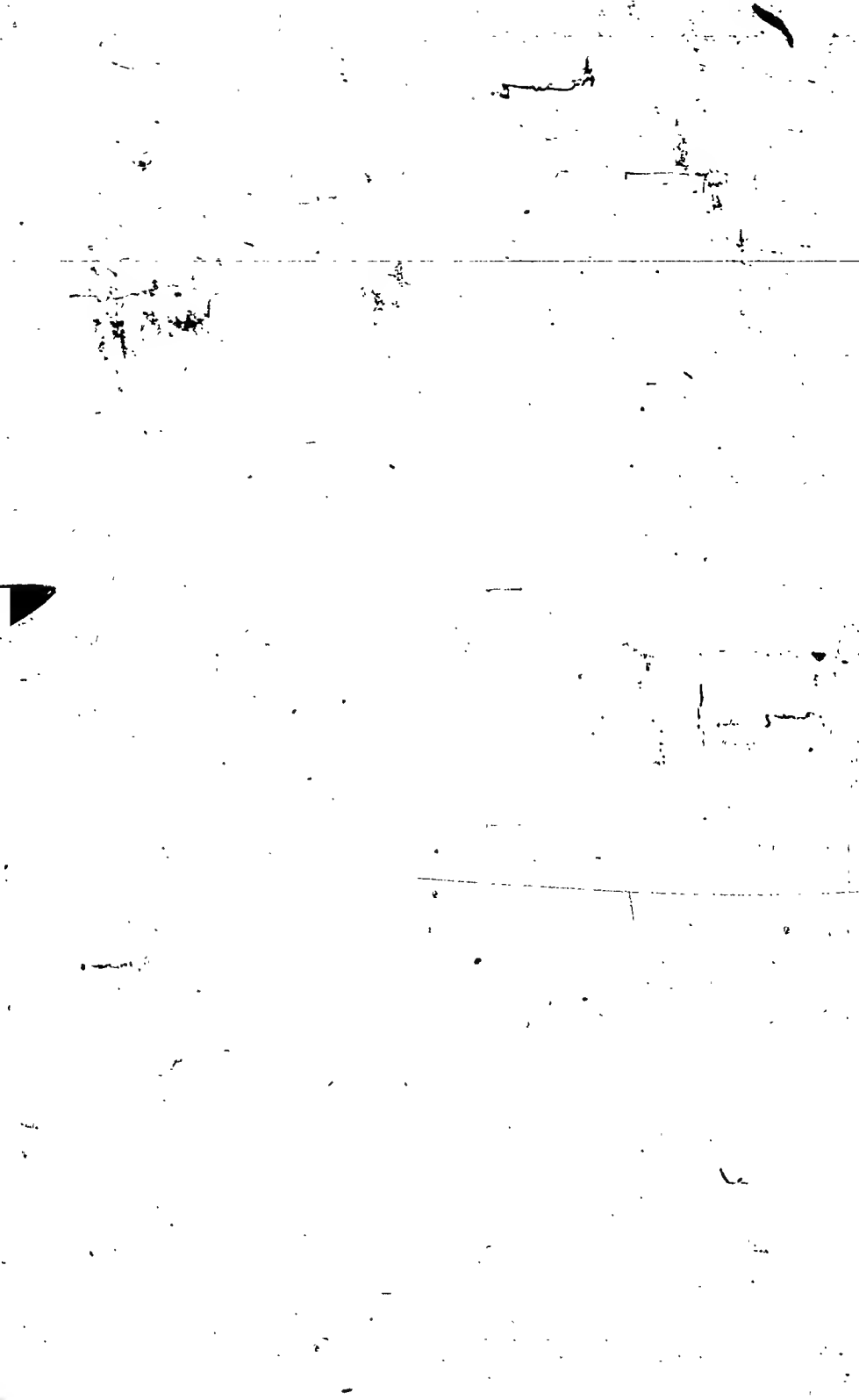
Beginnings of a
Moravian Congregation

IN

ALBERTA, CANADA

Commemorating the Semi-Centennial of its Organization
July 26, 1896

CLEMENT HOYLER



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Ludwig Klapstein—Heimtal was Organized in his home

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SOON after my arrival in South Edmonton and the commencement of my ministry in Bruederfeld and Bruderheim, I began to hear a great deal from my German-speaking friends about "Rebbadelle." That, at least, is the way I spelled the word in my earliest records, thinking the name might be of French derivation. A good many French geographical names occurred in the Edmonton District and so it was but natural to think that "Rebbadelle" was just another French settlement. Later, however, I learned that it was merely a slight mispronunciation of the English name "Rabbit Hill." Some ten or twelve miles West and Southwest of Bruederfeld, my first Canadian home, there is a section of country known as the Rabbit Hill District. Quite a few German settlers had located in that area, and it was they that had popularized the pronunciation "Rebbadelle."

Some of these Germans were Baptists and some were Lutherans. But in one portion of that general territory there were some Moravian-minded settlers who had come under the influence of Moravian "Diaspora" workers in Russia and Poland. They had met some of our Bruederfeld Moravians in South Edmonton, their common shopping town, and had learned from them that a Moravian minister was coming to Alberta. So, after my arrival, they extended an invitation to me through one of my Bruederfeld members, Wilhelm Drebert, and asked me to visit them as soon as possible and to conduct a service in one of their homes.

That portion of the settlement where these people lived had been called "Heimthal," now spelled "Heimtal." Several of them had come from Heimthal in Russian Poland. They evidently thought it would seem more homelike to call their new Canadian settlement by the same familiar name, which means, "Homedale."

On Thursday, February 20, 1896, only twelve days after I had preached my first Canadian sermon in Bruederfeld, I paid my initial visit to Heimtal, where, in the providence of God, a Moravian congregation was to be organized about five months later. I made my first trip to Heimtal in company with Julius Riemer, at whose home in Bruederfeld I was temporarily staying until a parsonage could be built.

We first went to the house of Ludwig Klapstein, who had been a school teacher and "Versammlungshalter" (leader of services) in the old country. He was not at home when we arrived, but his wife assured us that he would soon return. After a short time he appeared. I think he had been out hunting, for, if I remember correctly, he brought back some small game. In the course of the subsequent years—if I may digress for a moment—I had many a good substantial meal at his house; for Ludwig Klapstein was a mighty hunter and his wife was an excellent cook who knew how to prepare rabbits, wild ducks, prairie chickens, grouse and fish, not to mention "piroggen" and other Polish or Russian delicacies. Many a time I took quantities of fish and game birds back with me to my home in Bruederfeld, for everybody knew that, in spite of the plentiful game of those days, I was no hunter or fisherman myself.

In the afternoon of that first day in Heimtal we called upon five or six German-speaking families living in the vicinity, and

invited them to a meeting at the Klapstein house that evening. About twenty-five or thirty persons assembled. No doubt more would have come, had it been possible to notify them. We had a nice service. The people were great singers, and knew a lot of hymns from memory. I spoke to them on First Corinthians 15:58. At the close several voluntary prayers were offered. I was favorably impressed by the people, and instinctively felt that here were definite possibilities for the establishment of a Moravian congregation.

On Sunday, March 1, at 3:00 p.m., I conducted my second service in Heimtal, preaching to an audience of fifty people that packed the Klapstein house to capacity. On this trip I was accompanied by Carl Mauer. Our driver was young Edward Missal, a hired man working for one of the Bruederfeld members. It was a good meeting and brought us a step closer to the ultimate organization of a congregation in Heimtal. It was decided that I should come again on Sunday morning, March 22, and that I should dispense Holy Communion at the close of the service that day.

On the morning of March 22 I set out bright and early for Heimtal. I now had my own horse, as well as a buggy, and could drive to my new preaching place alone. But the event proved that I should not have gone without a guide, for I lost my way. Sleighing was at an end, as most of the snow had disappeared since my last trip which had been made in a bob-sled. The entire landscape looked quite different. The winter trail was obliterated. New tracks appeared from under the snow. Old landmarks were gone. At one point I made a wrong turn and soon I was hopelessly confused. I saw log structures which I had never seen before.

I finally drew up at the shack of a young Englishman, a bachelor, and asked for directions to Ootskwan, a little siding on the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, where I knew I would again be on familiar ground. His instructions were so mystifying that I offered him fifty cents, if he would hop in with me and ride along as far as Ootskwan. People in those days were always very obliging, and the young Englishman readily consented to accompany me, although it meant that he would have to walk back several miles. Money was scarce in those days, and it may be that fifty cents looked pretty good to my guide, who brought me safely to Ootskwan. I did not dream at that time that a school would some day be built near that siding and that a son of mine would be its principal and would teach some of the Moravian boys and girls from Heimtal.

In spite of this delay on that memorable Sunday, I arrived at the Klapstein house in ample time and found an assemblage of over fifty persons. We had an edifying service, at the close of which we celebrated the Lord's Supper. Participation at the sacrament was small, for evidently the good people wanted to see first how we conducted so important a celebration. Nevertheless I think that on that occasion the decision was made in the hearts of the people, definitely to link up with the Moravian Church.

From this time on, preaching services in Heimtal were held more or less regularly, sometimes on a Sunday, sometimes on a

week night. The attendance grew. By summer a sufficient number of families felt ready to organize a regular Moravian congregation, and the date was set for Sunday, July 26, 1896.

All day Saturday, July 25, I made my final calls upon the families that were to be received the next day as charter members. They were the following: Ludwig Klapstein, Samuel Klapstein, George Helm, Peter Voelpel, Michael Wedman. I prepared the membership list with the following result: 14 communicants, 2 non-communicants, 21 children, a total of 37—truly a modest beginning.

The day of organization dawned clear and bright. By ten o'clock, according to my records, "many people had gathered for the services of the day—over one hundred!" Six or seven wagonloads of people had come from Bruederfeld. I preached the organization sermon on Psalm 20:5, "In the name of our God we will set up our banners." Among my old papers I found a brief outline of the sermon, which I will insert at this place:

Introduction. The Church on earth is the Church Militant. Therefore the symbol of a flag or banner is appropriate. This flag or banner is the Cross, the Christian warrior's standard.

I Why is the Cross compared to a Banner?

1. It is to be taken into the conflict, a challenge to the enemy.
2. It serves to rally the Lord's hosts around it.
3. It serves to show to which army we belong.
4. It is a symbol of ultimate victory.

II What is the Church's Duty with Regard to the Banner?

1. To "set it up," i.e., make the Cross our most prominent theme.
2. To keep it aloft and never to preach "another Gospel."
3. To undertake all tasks "in the name of our God."
4. To trust in God's help at all times.

Conclusion. If, here on earth, we are true members of the Church Militant, we will ultimately be a part of the Church Triumphant, celebrating the eternal victory in the Kingdom of Heaven.

After the reading of the membership list, the formal proclamation of the organization was solemnly published, and the hymn stanza was sung: "We who here together are assembled."

The noon-day meal was partaken of by the entire congregation under the trees of the near-by grove.

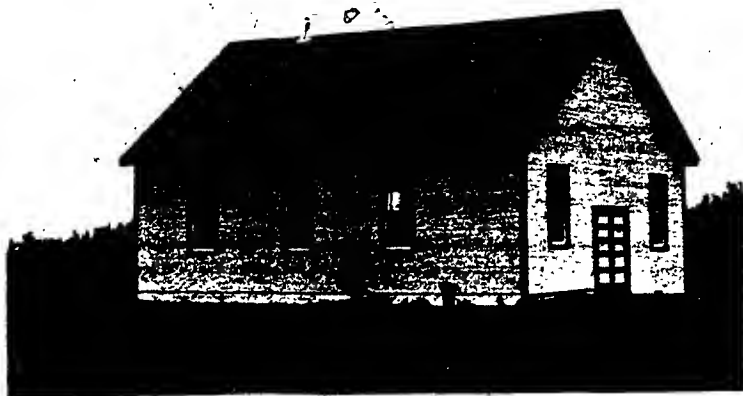
In the afternoon a Sunday School was organized, the baptism of a young child was performed,—belonging to some recent arrivals by the name of Stockmann, who had at one time lived in Roumania and later joined the Heimtal congregation,—and a second church service was held. This service was held out of doors and took the form of a Lovefeast, a custom familiar to our people from the old country. I delivered an address on Acts 4:32, 33, coupled with Ephesians 2:20, 22. I also read and explained the "Brotherly Agreement," a document which forms the basis of the organization of every Moravian congregation. Tea and simple sweet-bread were served at the Lovefeast, which I think brought about a real blessing

to all. It had at first been suggested that some other preparation be served, but at my request tea was substituted.

In the evening we held a brief church council, attended by all the voting members of the newly organized congregation. We elected Ludwig Klapstein, Elder, and Peter Voelpel, Trustee. And so Heimtal, the third Moravian congregation in Alberta, came into being.

Services continued to be held in the home of Ludwig Klapstein. He and his wife deserve great credit for their untiring zeal and willingness to place their home at the disposal of the congregation. It meant much work, not only because of the added labor of keeping the home clean in rainy weather and during winter thaws, but also because our host had to carry in and remove the planks and blocks for the seats every time we met. Moreover, Klapsteins usually had many guests for dinner or supper whenever we held our services at their home.

After the arrival of a second minister, the Rev. W. N. Schwarze, in the late summer of 1896, Heimtal could receive increased attention. An English Sunday School and preaching place were started in the White Mud School House, some miles to the West of our German center, and for some time this outpost was maintained by the two ministers. At least one English Christmas program was given in that school house for the benefit of the children of that community.

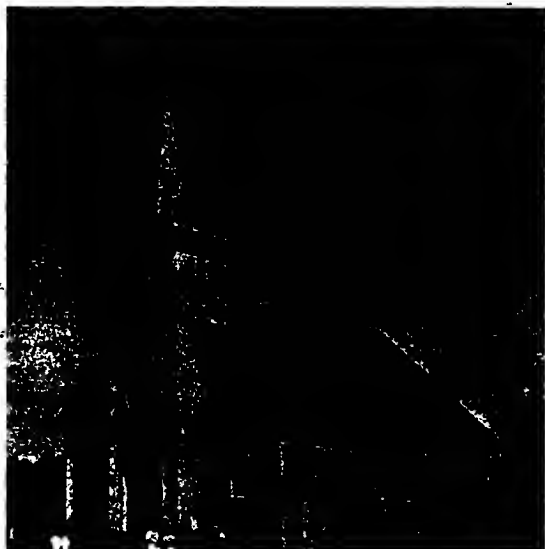


First Church—Dedicated September, 1900

Eventually the need of a church building for the congregation at Heimtal became so pressing, that steps were taken for the erection of an adequate structure of modest appearance and moderate seating capacity. The logs were sawn by the men themselves by means of large whipsaws. A fine job of dove-tailing at the corners was done by several of the men who were experts at that sort of work. By late summer, 1900, the building was ready for dedication.

Bishop Edmund A. Oerter, a member of the Provincial Elders' Conference, was commissioned to perform the ceremony. He and his wife were scheduled to arrive from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, on August 30. Five days before their arrival, on August 25, the Edmonton District was visited by a near-calamity. Five or six inches of heavy, wet snow fell. The standing grain, practically none of which had been cut as yet, was flattened to the ground. The people were greatly depressed. Although the snow melted in a few days and the grain tried to raise itself somewhat, harvesting was rendered very difficult. The self-binders could be operated in one direction only, namely against the lodged grain. Some of it had to be cut by cradle or scythe. Fortunately the grain was not frozen, and the ultimate yield was quite fair.

On Sunday, September 9, the dedication of the church took place. The day dawned somewhat dark and gloomy, but eventually it cleared up. A large concourse of people gathered in the yard at Klapstein's house, where we held a brief farewell service. The entire company then marched down the roadway to the church, about three hundred yards to the East. A brief ceremony took place outside before we entered. In a solemn manner, with something of a graceful flourish, Bishop Oerter inserted the key into the lock, and while he repeated the well known words of the hymn: "Tut mir auf die schoene Pforte, Fuehrt in Gottes Haus mich ein!" he turned the key, reverently opened the door and led the way into the interior, where the festivities were carried out according to schedule. Bishop Oerter preached the sermon. The Bruederfeld singers and musicians furnished special numbers. It was a great day for old and young.



New Church—Dedicated July, 1943

For more than forty years that church rendered good service. Great meetings were held in it, including some soul-stirring revival scenes, Christmas celebrations, and mission festivals. Eternity alone will reveal the countless blessings that flowed forth from those hallowed walls. Like the churches in Bruederfeld and Bruederheim, the Heimtal church also was beautified inside and outside.

Though never a large congregation—for its communicant membership seldom reached or exceeded seventy-five—nevertheless Heimtal has made a very worthwhile contribution to the work of the Moravian Church as a whole. Its loyal members contribute at a high per capita rate to local and benevolent causes. The congregation has also furnished several workers to the home and foreign field, including Elizabeth Schattschneider-Holtmeier, of Alaska and the Western District; Samuel Wedman, of Nicaragua and the Eastern and the Canadian Districts; and Rudolph Schulze, of the Canadian and the Western Districts.



Herman Schulze
His was the Longest Pastorate
1909 to 1939

During the past fifty years the Moravian Church, through its Home Mission Boards, has contributed a total of \$12,840 toward the erection of buildings and the stipends of the Heimtal home missionaries. The Heimtal pastor, however, has always helped a great deal with the general home mission work throughout the District, so that the stipend paid to the pastor is not altogether chargeable against Heimtal. During these fifty years Heimtal has paid back to the Church the sum of \$10,785 in the form of benevolences. The church property, which belongs to the denomination, is also a refund, representing a value of \$10,000. For its own local needs the congregation has raised \$22,274.00.

From the foregoing figures it will be seen that Heimtal, though still a home mission field, has not been a bad investment. It will keep on contributing generously to all Moravian benevolences, and may

also be counted on to furnish additional workers at home and abroad. Even now a grandson of Ludwig Klapstein is studying for the Moravian ministry.



Gottfried Henkelmann—First Resident Pastor

The following pastors have served Heimtal during the past fifty years, with the duration of their pastorates. Those marked with an asterisk resided at Heimtal, the rest served the congregation as a filial of a neighboring congregation, either Bruederfeld or Edmonton.

Clement Hoyler, 1896 - 1905.

William Schwarze, 1886 - 1898 (co-pastor).

*Gottfried Henkelmann, 1905 - 1908.

*Emil Suemper, 1908 - 1909.

*Herman Schulze, 1909 - 1939.

Samuel Wedman, 1940 - 1945.

Raymond Schultz, 1945 - —.

During these fifty years the following official acts were performed (up to the time of the publication of this pamphlet): Infant Baptisms, 124; Adult Baptisms, 6; Confirmations, 99; Marriages, 40; Funerals, 45. The present membership is as follows: Communicants, 76; Children, 26; Total, 102.



Raymond E. Schultz—Present Pastor

At present the congregation is being served from Edmonton. Its beautiful new church, consecrated in 1943, is to have a new church bell hung in its belfry as a memorial to its departed members. This bell is to be dedicated in connection with the jubilee services.



Clement Hoyler—Fifty Years after Organizing Heimtal.

May the invitation to come to the house of God, which it will peal forth to all people, meet with a glad response in the years to come.

I deem it a great privilege and an evidence of God's unmerited grace that I have been permitted to inscribe this little pamphlet to the memory of the founders of Heimtal and of the godly men and women who constituted its membership in the years gone by. May those who make up its present constituency, and especially the boys and girls of today and tomorrow, hear and heed the call of God to whole-hearted consecration, so that Heimtal may continue to be a city set upon a hill, sending forth a stream of blessing to the entire neighborhood and to many parts of the world as well.

This is the sincere prayer of your fellow worker in the vineyard of the Lord,

Green Bay, Wisconsin,

Summer of 1946.

Clement Hoyer

Additional Reminiscences of Heimtal

My story of "Heimtal in the Making" is really not complete unless at least some of the miscellaneous recollections that crowd in on my memory are recorded. Here are a few that take us back to the early years and that might be considered worthy of inclusion in a souvenir booklet of this kind—"lest we forget!"

Conditions have changed! The present generation can scarcely appreciate the trials which the first settlers endured in order to bequeathe to children and children's children the blessings which the latter now enjoy. The following little glimpses into the past give but an imperfect picture of what the old Heimtalers really went through. My own experiences are as nothing compared to the price they paid while hewing a new home out of the original wilderness.

1. ROAD CONDITIONS. Those early roads—how they haunt me still! They really were not roads at all. They were a nightmare. Even four or five years after the organization of Heimtal, the young wife of one of our ministers, whose parents lived in Heimtal, had such a terrible trip from Heimtal to her new home in a neighboring congregation fifty miles farther on, that her fitful slumbers during the subsequent night were disturbed by bad dreams which caused her to cry out a number of times: "Oh, Will, here is another awful mudhole."

Those so-called "roads" were mere shifting trials that wound in and out between clumps of trees, along the edge of meadows, through muskegs and marshes, across culvertless streams and grassy ditches. At some of the worst places corduroy had been laid, but after a protracted rainy spell the logs and poles began to float, making

precarious footing for the horses. There were several such bits of road between Bruederfeld, my home, and Heimtal, my out-station. For a while a good portion of the road from the Bruederfeld parsonage to the first crossroads a mile westward was entirely impassable. We had to drive through several farmers' yards. This necessitated the opening and closing of six awkward gates and bars, thus requiring more than half an hour to traverse a little over half a mile. I remember saying to some one about that time, in a fit of despondency, that if ever anything would drive me out of the country it would be the execrable roads of Alberta.

In the first years my mother accompanied me occasionally to Heimtal. She was a small woman and weighed perhaps no more than 130 pounds. So, at the worst places, I would get out of the buggy and let her plunge and flounder through alone, thus rendering it less likely that anything should happen to the horse, the buggy, or the harness. Generally I went ahead, equipped with rubber hip-boots that enabled me to pick my way through the boggy terrain, covered with scrub and underbrush. Many a time, as I watched her from in front, coming toward me, I noticed that she had her eyes tightly closed, probably for the twofold purpose of protecting them against mud splashes and in order to shut out the terrifying vision before her. On her face there always was a tense do-or-die expression, mingled with a look of utter resignation.

Later, when my wife joined me in Alberta, she negotiated these bad spots with considerable skill, having had experience with horses on her father's farm in Minnesota.

Very often I had to travel alone, and then I had to depend on my well-trained horse, faithful Jack, who knew just how to take these bottomless mudholes in his matter-of-fact stride, pulling the bouncing empty buggy behind him and stopping on the far side at my command, to enable me to resume my seat in the conveyance, after I had crept through the adjacent tangle of undergrowth.

Naturally, a driver became badly bespattered with mud on such a trip, and so, when I went to Heimtal to preach during wet seasons, I made it my practice to wear a raincoat on the way over. When I got to the Black Mud Creek, from where it was only another good mile over rising ground across the old McLeod ranch up to the Klapstein house, I halted beside the stream, got out of my buggy, stepped out of my hip-boots into my Sunday shoes, washed the mud off my face, put on my collar and necktie, donned my Prince Albert coat, and then drove on in state, looking as spick and span as if I had just stepped out of a Fifth Avenue drawing room in New York.

2. A PASTORAL CALL IN HEIMTAL. One day I was summoned to Heimtal to visit a dying woman, who desired to receive Holy Communion. When I arrived at the aforesaid Black Mud Creek, I found it resembling a raging torrent, rather than the usual innocent-looking stream, calmly flowing at the bottom of its deep channel. I noticed that the bridge near the old abandoned ranch was afloat, anchored by heavy ropes to both of the high banks of the creek. The approaches were under water to a considerable distance from the main current. A mile away, beyond the tumble-down ranch buildings,

I could see the little shack in which the dying woman was expectantly awaiting me, that I might bring her the consolation of God's Word and the spiritual refreshing of the Lord's Supper. I unhitched the horse and tied him to a small tree near the water's edge.

Putting on my high rubber boots, which I had with me in the buggy, I cut a stout stick and waded into the water that was sweeping over the approaches to the bridge. With the stick I carefully sounded the depth of the water all around the spot where I would set my foot at the next step, thus making sure that I would not fall into a hole and be swept away by the turbulent stream. Reaching the floating bridge, I clambered upon it, walked across and sat down at the edge on the farther side. My problem now was to reach the higher ground beyond. Ascertaining the depth of the water with the help of my stick, I finally slid from my perch on the bridge and carefully waded through the fast-flowing current until I reached dry ground and continued on my way to the settler's shack.

My ministry fulfilled, and feeling an inner joy because of the privilege of bringing comfort to a dying saint, I retraced my steps to the bridge, went through the same process as before, hitched up my horse and was soon on my way home. Eventually a fine steel bridge was built across the Black Mud on the surveyed road allowance, some distance down stream, with high approaches, so that flood waters could no longer interrupt traffic.

3. A MEMORABLE FUNERAL. I shall never forget the funeral which I was called upon to conduct over the remains of one of the highly esteemed charter members of Heimtal, Michael Wedman, father of the Rev. Samuel Wedman, President of the Canadian District Executive Board. He passed away in April, 1900, during the time of the big spring thaws. His home was in the western part of the Heimtal settlement near another stream known as the White Mud Creek. I might mention here in passing that the soft white mud, lining the course of this stream, was largely used by the early settlers in the Rabbit Hill District for whitewashing the outside of their log houses. The outside of the Klapstein house, for example, was also embellished with some of this clean-looking mud.

When I went over for the funeral of Michael Wedman I decided to use my handy two-wheeled road-cart, the lightest conveyance I had. The roads were well nigh impassable, but I thought that with my trusty road-cart I could get through anywhere. I got along fairly well for the first two or three miles, as far as the farmstead of one of my Bruederfeld members, Ferdinand Busenius, living on the western edge of the Bruederfeld settlement. Here I met Gottfried Henkelmann, later ordained to the ministry, who was also on his way to the funeral, but had started out from home on horseback. We held a consultation. I had had enough of my road-cart and said that I was going to go on foot the rest of the way, even though it must still have been seven or eight miles to the Wedman home. I was wearing my high rubber boots and knew that I could cope with any situation that might arise. My companion had only ordinary shoes, but he decided to go with me on foot also, so that we would not be limited to the fenced-in road allowances.

• We first cut across some fields and grazing lands toward the Calgary and Edmonton Railway tracks, and then followed the right of way of that line as far South as Otokswan siding. Here we struck out in a westerly direction and soon came upon a bit of road more awful than anything I had ever seen before. Our progress was slow, but my rubber boots at least kept my feet dry. My companion, after vainly trying to avoid getting wet feet by dodging the pools and mudholes, finally plunged through everything that came along. We reached the Wedman homestead just as the assembled congregation concluded that we were unable to get through. In fact, Ludwig Klapstein, the Elder, was just about to begin the service. People were all standing outside on the premises, for the little log house could not have held one half the crowd.

We conducted the service as solemnly and as conventionally as the circumstances permitted, G. Henkelmann standing in his muddy shoes and wet feet, and the writer presiding over the obsequies in his hip-boots. After the closing hymn we proceeded to the cemetery for the committal service. We again traversed that bit of indescribable road, a heavy lumber wagon serving as hearse, and other similar conveyances transporting all who wished to see the funeral service through to the end.

The Heimtal cemetery had already been staked off on one part of the forty-acre government grant which had been conveyed to the congregation for church purposes. The church had not as yet been built, but the burial plots had been laid out. By the time the committal service had been read and the grave had been closed, which was done in the presence of all, the shadows of evening began to lengthen. A long tramp back to the place where our horses were stabled was still before us, and it must have been close to midnight when I arrived at home.

4. PLEASANT MEMORIES OF HEIMTAL. I cherish many happy recollections of this little congregation. I will mention a few.

(a) Congregational Anniversaries. These were held on the Sunday nearest July 26 and were always popular occasions, which brought together large crowds of people, not only from the adjacent Rabbit Hill country, but also from other Moravian congregations in Northern Alberta—Bruederfeld, Bruederheim, Edmonton, and New Sarepta. Before we had the church, we crowded into the Klapstein house, though many people had to stand outside and listen through the open windows. If the weather was fair, the afternoon services were held outdoors.

Noonday lunch was served under the trees, where long tables were set up. Plain, substantial fare in great abundance was provided, and vast quantities of coffee, combined with chicory in earliest years, was served. Everybody could eat his fill without money and without price.

After the church was built, services were held indoors, except when the crowds were extra large. A nice grove near the church afforded facilities for setting up tables for the noonday meal and for the accommodation of an audience of several hundred people. These gatherings provided opportunity for meeting friends old and new,

from near and far, and many happy moments were spent in Christian fellowship during the noon hour.

For many years an excellent church band, under the direction of its gifted minister, the Rev. Hermann Schulze, led the singing and discoursed sweet music after dinner. Some years the band from the neighboring Lutheran congregation joined in these after-dinner concerts.

Since the new church is finished, meals are served in the roomy basement, where all necessary kitchen and dining hall facilities have been provided.

(b) Heimtal Weddings. Some of these stand out very prominently in my memory. I will refer to only one—the marriage of the Rev. H. Schulze and his bride, Miss Emmy Guenther. Both were born of Moravian missionary parentage, the former among the Eskimos of Labrador, the latter among the Hottentots of South Africa. They were both educated in Germany, where they learned to know each other, and were eventually called into home mission service in Alberta, a land about which probably neither had heard in their early school days. The bridegroom had been serving Heimtal for some time as a bachelor, the bride came over a year or two later. I arranged a meeting for them in Dundurn, Saskatchewan, where we were living at the time. It was a romantic meeting for the two, but I will not “tell tales out of school.”

After a few days of further courtship in Saskatchewan, they proceeded to Edmonton, and some time later I was invited to come to Heimtal to tie the knot in the presence of the rest of the Alberta ministers and a large congregation, which participated most sympathetically in the happy affair. The couple occupied the Heimtal parsonage for over thirty years—longer than any other minister. Their five boys were born during this time, one of them becoming a minister of our Church.

(c) Heimtal Young People. For a small congregation Heimtal had a large number of young people during some of the early years. The first Moravian Canadian Christian Endeavor society was organized in Heimtal. Early in the history of the congregation several large families moved into the settlement, one from Wisconsin, two from Brazil, bringing with them a number of young men and women, growing boys and girls. They were a fine spiritual-minded group. We had good and helpful C. E. meetings. Our socials, too, were of a high order and were thoroughly enjoyed. I still remember some of the games they played, like “Beast, Bird and Fish,” which they played both in English and in German. From the Brazilian members we learned the names of some South American birds and animals, one favorite being the Brazilian “Bruellaffe.”

It was a great joy for us all when one of the Heimtal young people offered to go as a missionary to Alaska—Elizabeth Schattschneider. After a course of training at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago she served on the Kuskokwim for several years, first as an unmarried missionary and then as the helpmate of Herman Holtmeier, both in Alaska and later in the ministry of the Western District.

As a result of one of the most blessed revivals which I witnessed in Alberta, many of the young people of Heimtal took their place as consecrated workers not only in their home congregation, but also in Edmonton, Vancouver and elsewhere. May that spirit of consecration never die out in Heimtal! Would that others might hear the call to Christian service at home and abroad!

(d) The Dedication of the First Heimtal Church. This event, which has already been referred to, marked an important milestone in the history of the congregation. As previously stated, it was signalized by the visit of Bishop Edmund A. Oerter, the first Moravian Bishop ever to visit Alberta. Thereby hangs a tale.

About the time I made the first announcement to the Heimtal people that Bishop Oerter was going to be present at the dedication of their church, I also announced that I had started a little orchestra in Bruederfeld and expected to bring it over for the anniversary of the congregation in July. One of the instruments of that orchestra was a 'cello, which had been given to me by the well-known educator and musician, Abraham R. Beck, of Lititz, Pennsylvania. Mr. Beck's son Paul, was an intimate friend of mine and a one-time roommate at the old Moravian College on Church Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

When that 'cello was shipped to me in Alberta, it was wrapped in a nice green bag and enclosed in a strong wooden box. I had at one time played 'cello in our college orchestra, but did not own that instrument. Now I became the happy possessor of a fine instrument with an interesting history.

In those days the boys and girls of Heimtal did not know what a 'cello was. They had never seen one, nor had they ever heard of a bishop. So, when I told the congregation about the coming of Bishop Oerter and said something about my orchestra and my 'cello, they did not quite know what it was all about.

At last the day arrived—the fourth anniversary of the congregation—the day on which my orchestra was to make its first public appearance in Heimtal. That was a few weeks prior to Bishop Oerter's visit, but the expectations of the Heimtal boys and girls had been keyed up to a high pitch, and their minds were somewhat confused.

So, when I arrived at the Klapstein farmyard at the head of a caravan of Bruederfeld lumber wagons, and was seen sitting alone in my buggy, with the precious 'cello in its bright green bag at my side, it was only natural that the green bag should immediately arouse the curiosity of a group of small boys, and become the object of speculation. They had never seen that green bag before. What was it? What was in it? Suddenly one bright little fellow—he is living still—announced triumphantly in a loud voice: "Here comes Brother Hoyler with the Bishop!" When the real Bishop arrived for the dedication of the church a few weeks later, the Heimtal children learned that Moravian Bishops are human beings and not some mysterious things that come in green bags.

—The Author.



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